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Illinois State Board of Education

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Ronald J. Gidwitz
Chairman


Dr. Robert E. Schiller
State Superintendent of Education



DATE: January 8, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable George H. Ryan, Governor
The Honorable Emil Jones, Senate President
The Honorable Frank Watson, Senate Minority Leader
The Honorable Michael J. Madigan, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Tom Cross, House Republican Leader

FROM: Robert E. Schiller 
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: Charter Schools Annual Report for School Year 2001-2002

This report is submitted in compliance with Section 27A-12 of the Illinois Charter Schools Law (105 ILCS 5/27A-12) by the Illinois State Board of Education. The first report was submitted in January 1997, and each subsequent report has built on the last. The report of January 2003 reflects school year 2001-2002 and the operation of twenty-three charter schools throughout that school year.

cc: Clerk of the House
Secretary of the Senate
Legislative Research Unit
State Government Report Center

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Illinois Charter School Annual Report

January 2003



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Illinois Charter School Annual Report Requirements

This report is submitted for the 2001-2002 school year in compliance with Section 27A-12 of the Illinois Charter Schools Law (105 ILCS 5/27A-12). This section reads in part:

On or before the second Wednesday of January 1998, and on or before the second Wednesday of January of each subsequent calendar year, the State Board shall issue a report to the General Assembly and the Governor on its findings for the school year ending in the preceding calendar year.

In the annual report required by this Section, the State Board shall (i) compare the performance of charter school pupils with the performance of ethnically and economically comparable groups of pupils in other public schools who are enrolled in academically comparable courses, (ii) shall review information regarding the regulations and policies from which charter schools were released to determine if the exemptions assisted or impeded the charter school in meeting their stated goals and objectives, and (iii) shall include suggested changes in State law necessary to strengthen charter schools.

This report is structured to provide an overview of charter schools in Illinois and to address the required elements.

Illinois Charter School Overview

Charter schools in Illinois are public schools of choice, selected by students and parents for their unique offerings. The Illinois statute governing charter schools was enacted in April 1996 as Article 27A of the School Code to encourage educational excellence and promote new options. In authorizing charter schools, 105 ILCS 5/27A-2 states that it is the intent of the General Assembly:

To create a legitimate avenue for parents, teachers and community members to take responsible risks and create new, innovative and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system. The General Assembly seeks to create opportunities within the public school system of Illinois for development of innovative and accountable teaching techniques. The provisions of this Article should be interpreted liberally to support the findings and goals of this Section and to advance a renewed commitment by the State of Illinois to the mission, goals and diversity of public education.

To help them meet these goals, charter schools are exempt from Illinois School Code mandates except those specified in the Charter Schools Law (e.g., health/life safety, criminal background checks for employees, student discipline, child abuse reporting act, student records act, and state goals/standards/assessment). However, charter schools are **not** exempt from any civil rights laws or any federal special education requirements. They are accountable for meeting rigorous school content standards as defined in the Illinois Learning Standards, and students must participate in the state assessments. Thus, schools exchange accountability for flexibility.

The orientation of charter schools varies widely. Some are designed to serve specific student populations such as the primary grades or dual language pupils. Others provide a specific curriculum such as Montessori, back-to-basics, or Direct Instruction. Yet others are designed with governance and parent involvement components that are integral to their mission.

During 2001-2002, there were 23 charter schools in operation in Illinois serving approximately 8,500 students. In school year 1998-1999, charter schools reported serving 209 students with disabilities. This number has increased each year since, and for school year 2001-2002 schools reported serving 706 students with disabilities. A brief description of each charter school that operated in 2001-2002 is provided below. Table 1 follows and chronicles the history of Illinois charter schools from the 1996-1997 school year to the present. A map showing the location of all 2001-2002 charter schools is included as Attachment A.

Academy of Communications and Technology Charter School (*The Academy*) – Chicago 299

This school serves grades 6-12 and is located on the far west side of Chicago. Founded by two former Chicago public school teachers, the school has a college preparatory curriculum that incorporates a strong focus on communication arts and technological literacy. The Academy cultivates a small school environment and considers all community members (founders, teachers, parents, students, and neighbors) partners in creating a school that attempts to break the cycle of poverty.

Alain Locke Charter School (*Alain Locke*) – Chicago 299

Developed by 21st Century Urban Schools, a partnership of the Inner City Teaching Corps and the Ryan Foundation, this school is dedicated to bringing excellence in academic and social development to children in an under-resourced urban community and to help them achieve their full potential. There is a strong focus on early literacy and enrichment after-school activities to keep the children engaged in the learning process. The school will serve grades prekindergarten-12 at full implementation.

Betty Shabazz International Charter School (*Betty Shabazz*) – Chicago 299

Located in the Grand Crossing community on Chicago's South Side, this K-8 school balances core instruction with African-centered themes, arts and humanities, and technology and links students to local community resources as well as those in South Africa, Brazil, and Ghana. Parental involvement is central to this "maximum expectation" learning institution.

Chicago International Charter School (*Chicago International*) – Chicago 299

The Chicago Charter School Foundation runs this multi-campus school. The Foundation's mission is to operate K-12 charter schools that provide a rigorous, college preparatory education to every student.

Fort Bowman Academy Charter School (*Ft. Bowman*) – Cahokia 187

Located in Cahokia District 187, this school is sponsored by Educating for the Future, a group founded by parents. It will serve grades K-12 at full implementation.

Global Village Charter School (*Global Village*) – Chicago 299

The multiple campuses of this school share a mission to provide a specialized curriculum based on Chicago's rich multicultural heritage and world-renowned cultural, artistic, and scientific traditions. A unique social studies curriculum for the younger students teaches world studies through the eyes of a refugee child, and because it is the root of a large percentage of all English words, Latin is taught. Art, music and science are also emphasized. Older students enjoy an association with the Boys Choir of Harlem Replication Project, which allows for the integration of music throughout the interdisciplinary academic curriculum. The school will serve grades prekindergarten-12 at full implementation.

Governors State University Charter School (*Governors State*) – Crete-Monee 201U

This school served grades K-4 and utilized the unique student-directed learning theories of the Reggio Emilia approach.

Keep Every Youth Successful Charter School (*KEYS*) – Edwardsville 7

This school is the first district initiated charter school. A result of collaborative efforts with the Edwardsville district, this small school serves at-risk middle school students in grades 6-8.

Lawndale Educational And Regional Network Charter School (*LEARN*) – Chicago 299

Serving students in grades K-8, this school provides a rigorous academic program utilizing the Core Knowledge curriculum and a low student-teacher ratio to prepare students for success in high school, college and beyond. LEARN also focuses on bringing parents into the school.

Noble Street Charter High School (*Noble Street*) – Chicago 299

Led by two former Chicago public high school teachers in partnership with the Northwestern University Settlement House, this charter school prepares urban youth in grades 9-12 to function successfully in society by emphasizing commitment to educational excellence; civic responsibility; and respect for the community, the environment, and others. A unique feature of the schools is the daily Advisory class, which covers study skills, career exploration and college preparation, conflict resolution and ethical behavior, ecological awareness, and physical fitness and nutrition. The school also requires students to do 20 hours of service learning per year.

North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School (*North Kenwood*) – Chicago 299

Affiliated with the University of Chicago's Center for School Improvement, this school provides an education to students in grades prekindergarten-8 while also

serving as a school development center for urban teachers. The curriculum is based on the most current research in literacy and mathematics, and its technological infrastructure supports the curriculum.

North Lawndale Charter School (*North Lawndale*) – Chicago 299

This college preparatory high school integrates high academic expectations with community service, work experience, and technology education to encourage and enable students in the North Lawndale community to successfully attend college. The school serves grades 9-12 and offers block scheduling, extended study and intersessions in which student pursue learning goals through long-term projects.

Nuestra America Charter School (*Nuestra America*) – Chicago 299

This school's mission was to make college entrance a viable alternative for all its students. It was a dual language high school located in the Little Village area of Chicago.

Octavio Paz Charter School (*Octavio Paz*) – Chicago 299

Affiliated with the United Neighborhood Organization, this school serves students in grades K-8 and provides a highly structured curriculum based on the Direct Instruction method. It uses repetition, reinforcement, and mastery to improve student achievement, and it provides a disciplined environment, high academic standards, and intensive English instruction. It serves a diverse student population from Pilsen and the Near West Side.

Perspectives Charter School (*Perspectives*) – Chicago 299

This school provides a rigorous education program and a character development plan called A Disciplined Life for students in grades 6-12. This plan focuses on creating positive self-perceptions, building strong communication techniques, and helping students recognize their responsibility to make a valuable contribution to the community. Students experience internships, community service, and one-on-one mentoring travel programs.

Prairie Crossing Charter School (*Prairie Crossing*) – Woodland 50 and Fremont 79

Located in Grayslake, this school serves youngsters from two Lake County districts. The environment is the school theme. Prairie Crossing will serve grades K-8 at full implementation and is one of two schools for which the Illinois State Board holds the charter directly.

Robertson Charter School (*Robertson*) – Decatur 61

The result of a community member's desire to provide more resources to an underserved population, this school has a focus on at-risk students. The school will serve students in grades K-8 at full implementation.

Southern Illinois University East St. Louis Charter School (*SIU-E. St. Louis*) – East St. Louis 189

This school is a partnership between Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and the district and serves at-risk students in grades 9-12. Students have access to a wide range of health and social services as a result of the university connection.

Springfield Ball Charter School (*Springfield Ball*) – Springfield 186

This school has a theme of literacy and numeracy, operates an extended school year, and offers Spanish language instruction for all grades as an integral part of the curriculum. It is designed to serve grades prekindergarten-8 at full implementation.

Thomas Jefferson Charter School (*Thomas Jefferson*) – Community Consolidated District 59

The school serves students in grades K-8 and uses the Core Knowledge curriculum. Located in Cook County, it is one of two state-chartered schools.

Triumphant Charter Middle School (*Triumphant*) – Chicago 299

This school serves grades 6-8 and is committed to transforming the average or below average student into a scholar poised for success in high school, college and beyond. Classes are of mixed age and ability. The curriculum includes foreign language, algebra, and integrated thematic, project-based humanities teams that explore identity, community and justice. Students enjoy the opportunity to take college courses at the nearby Olive Harvey City College and to take study trips throughout the state, country and world.

Young Women's Leadership Charter School (*Young Women's*) – Chicago 299

This school follows the small schools model and will serve grades 6-12 at full implementation. The focus is on a rigorous career and college preparatory curriculum emphasizing math, science, and technology; leadership; and personal and social development.

Youth Connection Charter School (*Youth Connection*) – Chicago 299

This is an alternative-type high school program operating at 25 sites throughout Chicago. Youth Connection Charter School students often enroll after months, and sometimes years, of being out of school. The educational environment emphasizes basic skills, life skills, social development, and job readiness.

Table 1. Illinois Charter Schools To Date: Operation and Enrollments

<i>Charter School</i>	<i>1996-1997</i>	<i>1997-1998</i>	<i>1998-1999</i>	<i>1999-2000</i>	<i>2000-2001</i>	<i>2001-2002</i>	<i>Estimated 2002-2003</i>
Tomorrow's Builders Charter School (new in 2002-2003)							46
Global Village						189	225
LEARN						94	120
Robertson						71	76
KEYS						23	23
Young Women's					150	301	327
Governors State					64	67	*
Alain Locke				132	100	175	275
Noble Street				127	256	365	473
Prairie Crossing				59	120	159	221
Thomas Jefferson				64	62	73	75
SIU-E. St. Louis				100	100	112	110
Ft. Bowman			136	167	108	234	257
North Kenwood			113	155	171	259	333
North Lawndale			86	153	236	353	385
Octavio Paz			527	700	777	789	795
Betty Shabazz			266	246	273	285	295
Springfield Ball			175	236	278	259	357
Chicago International		1456	1552	1920	2366	2404	2800
Perspectives		117	136	148	146	154	175
The Academy		132	155	244	238	273	295
Nuestra America		100	117	150	179	171	**
Youth Connection		1013	1475	1450	1550	1484	1750
Triumphant		160	170	170	176	185	185
Chicago Preparatory Charter School		113	***				
Peoria Alternative Charter School	75	100	100	**			

*Governors State – charter revoked at end of 2001-2002 school year

**Nuestra America and Peoria Alternative – schools did not renew charter at end of initial charter period

***Chicago Preparatory – Ceased operations mid-year of 1998-1999 school year

Tables 2A – 4B display additional information regarding the 23 charter schools in operation in Illinois throughout 2001-2002. Much of the charter school information is self-reported. Annual school report card data supplements information when available. Please note that two schools closed before providing information, and one school failed to respond to requests for information.

Part of the flexibility of charter schools is the freedom to select their own school calendar and hours of operation apart from the district they serve. They can also select the grades or ages they wish to serve. Once that determination is made, enrollment is open across the district to all students of that age or grade range. If there is an enrollment larger than the potential number of students allowed, a lottery must be held. In many instances, the charter schools had more applicants than seats available.

Table 2A. Charter School Demographic Data for 2001-2002

Name of Charter School	Grades Served in 2001-2002	Full Planned Grade Range	Number of Sites	Lottery Use for 2001-2002	Number of Instructional Days	School Hours
The Academy	6-12	6-12	1 site	104 applications, 104 new students	175 days	8:00-3:30
Alain Locke	PreK-3	K-12	1 site	*	*182 days	8:30-5:30
Betty Shabazz	K-8	K-8	*	*	*	*
Chicago International	K-12	K-12	4 sites	1,605 applications, 222 new students	*	8:00-4:00
Ft. Bowman	K-8	K-12	1 site	190 applications, 15 new students	176 days	8:00-4:00
Global Village	PreK-6	PreK-12	2 sites	None needed	180 days	8:00-5:00
Governors State KEYS	K-4	K-4	1 site	*	*	*
LEARN	6-8	6-8	1 site	None needed	174 days	7:30-2:45
Noble Street	K-8	K-8	1 site	150 applications, 96 new students	200 days	8:30-3:00
North Kenwood	9-11	9-12	1 site	327 applications, 164 new students	185 days	7:55-4:15
North Lawndale	PreK-8	PreK-8	1 site	343 applications, 48 new students	176 days	8:30-3:00
Nuestra America	9-12	9-12	1 site	175 applications, 110 new students	187 days	8:00-3:25
Octavio Paz	9-12	9-12	1 site	*	*	*
Perspectives	K-8	K-12	2 sites	None needed	179 days	8:00-3:00
Prairie Crossing	6-12	6-12	1 site	298 applications, 42 new students	173 days	8:30-3:00
Robertson	K-4	K-8	1 site	117 applications, 64 new students	*	8:00-3:30
SIU-E. St. Louis	K-3	K-8	1 site	None needed	180 days	8:30-3:30
Springfield Ball	9-12	Age 14-19	1 site	206 applications, 42 new students	176 days	8:15-3:15
Thomas Jefferson	PreK-6	PreK-8	1 site	160 applications, 65 new students	200 days	9:00-3:30
Triumphant	K-8	K-8	1 site	None needed	187 days	8:30-3:30
Young Women's	6-8	6-8	1 site	110 applications, 91 new students	185days	7:50-4:00
Youth Connection	6-10	6-12	1 site	273 applications, 75 new students	176 days	8:30-3:30
	9-12	9-12	25 sites	2,859 applications, 1,749 new students	180 days	8:00-3:00

*Data not provided.

Table 2B. Student Demographic Data for 2001-2002

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>Low Income % School and [District]</i>	<i>% Drop Out</i>	<i>% Suspended</i>	<i>% Expelled</i>	<i># Graduated</i>
The Academy	89.4% [85.3%]	2.6%	0%	0%	6 – 12 th grade
Alain Locke	79.9% [85.3%]	0%	*	0%	N/A
Betty Shabazz	69.5% [85.3%]	*	*	*	*
Chicago International	70.8% [85.3%]	Less than 1%	9.1%	Less than 1%	75 – 8 th grade; 29 – 12 th grade
Ft. Bowman	* [76.8%]	0%	*	0%	N/A
Global Village	38.7% [85.3%]	0%	8.3%	0%	N/A
Governors State	14.9% [33.8%]	*	*	*	*
KEYS	17.4% [12.6%]	0%	12%	0%	10 – 8 th grade
LEARN	86.2% [85.3%]	0%	0%	0%	5 – 8 th grade
Noble Street	83.0% [85.3%]	Less than 1%	8.5%	0%	N/A
North Kenwood	67.1% [85.3%]	0%	4.6%	0%	26 – 8 th grade
North Lawndale	81.0% [85.3%]	3.4%	23.0%	Less than 1%	52 – 12 th grade
Nuestra America	81.0% [85.3%]	*	*	*	*
Octavio Paz	90.5% [85.3%]	Less than 1%	6.3%	0%	61 – 8 th grade
Perspectives	81.2% [85.3%]	Less than 1%	5.2%	0%	15 – 12 th grade
Prairie Crossing	0% [6.0% & 2.7%]	0%	Less than 1%	0%	N/A
Robertson	93.0% [66.7%]	0%	0%	0%	N/A
SIU-E. St. Louis	89.3% [92.2%]	28%	7.2%	1.6%	12 – 12 th grade
Springfield Ball	26.0% [51.4%]	0%	3.75%	0%	N/A
Thomas Jefferson	13.7% [23.0%]	0%	0%	0%	3 – 8 th grade
Triumphant	95.1% [85.3%]	0%	1.6%	0%	58 – 8 th grade
Young Women's	62.1% [85.3%]	Less than 1%	14.7%	Less than 1%	N/A
Youth Connection	90.7% [85.3%]	19.1%	0%	Less than 1%	711 – 12 th grade

*Data not provided.

Table 2C. Student Retention Data for 2001-2002

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i># (%) Of Students Leaving for District Public School During 2001-2002</i>	<i># Of Students Who Did Not Return in 2001-2002 (other than graduates)</i>
The Academy	7 (2.6%)	36
Alain Locke	*	15
Betty Shabazz	*	*
Chicago International	59 (2.5%)	71
Ft. Bowman	16 (6.7%)	*
Global Village	6 (2.3%)	N/A – 1 st year
Governors State	*	*
KEYS	4 (16.0%)	N/A – 1 st year
LEARN	0 (0.0%)	N/A – 1 st year
Noble Street	1 (0.3%)	28
North Kenwood	6 (1.9%)	19
North Lawndale	7 (2.0%)	12
Nuestra America	*	*
Octavio Paz	90 (11.4%)	161

Table 2C (continued). Student Retention Data for 2001-2002

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i># (%) Of Students Leaving for District Public School During 2001-2002</i>		<i># Of Students Who Did Not Return in 2001-2002 (other than graduates)</i>
Perspectives	6	(3.9%)	15
Prairie Crossing	0	(0.0%)	5
Robertson	9	(12.2%)	N/A – 1 st year
SIU-E. St. Louis	7	(5.6%)	33
Springfield Ball	16	(5.0%)	31
Thomas Jefferson	6	(8.2%)	7
Triumphant	8	(4.3%)	4
Young Women's	29	(9.7%)	10
Youth Connection	209	(8.7%)	60

*Data not provided

With students attending charter schools by parent choice, the student body is determined by parent selection plus a lottery process when the school is oversubscribed. This selection process means that the district population is not necessarily mirrored in the school's demographics. Table 2D lists racial ethnic data for each school by district, as well as the district data.

Table 2D. Charter School Racial Ethnic Enrollment Data by Percentage for 2001-2002

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Native American</i>
The Academy	0	97.4	2.6	0	0
Alain Locke	0	100	0	0	0
Betty Shabazz	0	100	0	0	0
Chicago International	2.7	76.0	20.6	0.4	0.2
Global Village	10.8	53.2	14.9	20.7	0.5
LEARN	0	100	0	0	0
Noble Street	4.4	11.8	81.6	1.4	0.8
North Kenwood	0.3	99.0	0.3	0.3	0
North Lawndale	0	98.6	1.4	0	0
Nuestra America	0	9.9	90.1	0	0
Octavio Paz	0.3	52.2	47.4	0	0.1
Perspectives	1.9	56.5	40.9	0	0.6
Triumphant	0	100	0	0	0
Young Women's	18.3	66.4	14.3	1.0	0
Youth Connection	3.6	69.3	25.9	0.9	0.3
Chicago 299	9.6	50.8	36.1	3.3	0.2
Ft. Bowman	76.1	23.9	0	0	0
Cahokia 187	20.3	78.4	1.1	0.2	0
Governors State	14.9	83.6	1.5	0	0
Crete-Monee 201U	44.6	50.5	4.1	0.7	0.1

Table 2D (continued). Charter School Racial Ethnic Enrollment Data by Percentage for 2001-2002

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Native American</i>
KEYS	69.6	30.4	0	0	0
Edwardsville 7	88.3	9.2	0.8	1.6	0.1
Prairie Crossing	88.7	1.9	3.8	5.7	0
Woodland District 50	73.4	5.8	11.5	9.0	0.2
Fremont District 79	88.7	0.1	5.8	5.0	0.3
Robertson	8.5	90.1	1.4	0	0
Decatur 61	54.8	43.2	1.0	0.8	0.1
SIU – E. St. Louis	0	99.1	0.9	0	0
East St. Louis 189	0.2	98.8	0.9	0	0
Springfield Ball	68.3	28.5	0.3	2.8	0
Springfield 186	62.0	34.9	1.2	1.7	0.2
Thomas Jefferson	27.4	19.2	8.2	45.2	0
District 59	60.2	3.3	24.0	12.3	0.1

Charter schools must enroll students in the district of the appropriate age and grade range if parents choose that school. Students with disabilities or limited-English proficiency (LEP) must be accepted on the same basis as other students. If there is an oversubscription of students, then a lottery is held. Charter schools must observe all of the civil rights protections for students in their enrollment processes. Services included on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children and youth with disabilities must be provided. At times, there is a contract between the charter school and the home school district to provide such services and the per capita tuition rate is reduced to cover the cost (e.g., 90% rather than 100% per capita tuition).

Table 2E. Students With Special Needs in 2001-2002

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i># of Charter School Students With IEPs</i>	<i>% of Charter School Students With IEPs</i>	<i># of Charter School Students With LEP</i>	<i>% of Charter School Students With LEP</i>
The Academy	32	11.9%	3	1.1%
Alain Locke	22	10.0%	0	0%
Betty Shabazz	*	*	*	*
Chicago International	173	7.4%	182	7.7%
Ft. Bowman	4	1.7%	0	0%
Global Village	11	4.6%	80	33.4%
Governors State	*	*	*	*
KEYS	5	20%	0	0%
LEARN	5	5.2%	0	0%
Noble Street	43	12.1%	5	1.4%

Table 2E (continued). Students With Special Needs in 2001-2002

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i># of Charter School Students With IEPs</i>	<i>% of Charter School Students With IEPs</i>	<i># of Charter School Students With LEP</i>	<i>% of Charter School Students With LEP</i>
North Kenwood	21	6.9%	0	0%
North Lawndale	38	10.8%	0	0%
Nuestra America	*	*	*	*
Octavio Paz	41	5.2%	103	13.0%
Perspectives	19	12.3%	0	0%
Prairie Crossing	20	12.5%	1	0.6%
Robertson	4	5.4%	0	0%
SIU-E. St. Louis	5	4%	0	0%
Springfield Ball	39	12.2%	0	0%
Thomas Jefferson	0	0	40	54.8%
Triumphant	22	11.9%	0	0%
Young Women's	25	8.3%	3	1.0%
Youth Connection	177	7.4%	20	0.8%

*Data not provided.

According to the Charter Schools Law in effect for 2001-2002, instructional staff can either hold Illinois teacher certification as required in order to teach in traditional public schools or have a bachelor's degree **and** at least five years of relevant experience **and** pass the state tests of basic skills and relevant subject matter. Administrative personnel are not required to have certification or particular qualifications.

Table 3A. 2001-2002 Instructional Staff Certification Status

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>Certified</i>	<i>Possess Statutory Qualifications</i>	<i>Total Instructional Personnel</i>
The Academy	13	9	22
Alain Locke	9	14	23
Betty Shabazz	*	*	*
Chicago International	47	91	138
Ft. Bowman	13	1	14
Global Village	7	2	9
Governors State	*	*	*
KEYS	2	1	3
LEARN	4	2	6
Noble Street	18	7	25
North Kenwood	17	0	17
North Lawndale	8	13	21
Nuestra America	*	*	*
Octavio Paz	9	31	40
Perspectives	8	5.5	13.5
Prairie Crossing	10	1	11

Table 3A (continued). 2001-2002 Instructional Staff Certification Status

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>Certified</i>	<i>Possess Statutory Qualifications</i>	<i>Total Instructional Personnel</i>
Robertson	1	3.5	4.5
SIU-E. St. Louis	*	*	*
Springfield Ball	18	0	18
Thomas Jefferson	7	0	7
Triumphant	12	0	12
Young Women's	8	14	22
Youth Connection	122	0	122

*Data not provided.

Table 3B. 2001-2002 Administrative Staff Certification Status

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>Certified</i>	<i>Not Certified</i>	<i>Total Administrative Personnel</i>
The Academy	2	0	2
Alain Locke	1	1	2
Betty Shabazz	*	*	*
Chicago International	3	10	13
Ft. Bowman	1	3	4
Global Village	0	3	3
Governors State	*	*	*
KEYS	1	1	2
LEARN	2	0	2
Noble Street	0	3	3
North Kenwood	1	1.3	2.3
North Lawndale	0	3	3
Nuestra America	*	*	*
Octavio Paz	2	0	2
Perspectives	0	5.5	5.5
Prairie Crossing	0	1	1
Robertson	0	1	1
SIU-E. St. Louis	*	*	*
Springfield Ball	1	0	1
Thomas Jefferson	0	1	1
Triumphant	3	0	3
Young Women's	0	4	4
Youth Connection	7	24	31

*Data not provided.

Charter School Student Performance

Schools have accountability agreements with the charter authorizers and are ultimately accountable at renewal time. However, charter schools are not exempt from state testing requirements. Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) results for three years are presented in Table 4A, along with the districts' composite results; two years of

Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) data are available and presented in Table 4B. The notation "Not applicable" indicates that the school did not have any tested grade levels that year or was not open that year. The district total reflects the district's percent of meets and exceeds.

Table 4A. Comparison of ISAT Meets/Exceeds Percentages 2000-2002

Charter School/District Name	Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2000	Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2001	Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2002
The Academy	*	15.0	29
Alain Locke	Not applicable	Not applicable	14
Betty Shabazz	24	34.1	44
Chicago International	42	44.6	45
Global Village	Not applicable	Not applicable	34
LEARN	Not applicable	Not applicable	46
North Kenwood	51	53.9	51
Octavio Paz	21	28.6	43
Perspectives	26	41.0	50
Triumphant	16	19.7	29
Young Women's	Not applicable	Not applicable	57
Chicago District 299	36.9	38.3	39.5
Ft. Bowman	61	42.1	42
Cahokia District 187	39.5	39.4	41.1
Governors State	Not applicable	60.5	46
Crete-Monee District 201U	60.6	57.7	54.5
KEYS	Not applicable	Not applicable	38
Edwardsville District 7	75	76.9	75.5
Prairie Crossing	Not applicable	96.0	95
Woodland District 50	73.6	75.4	75.9
Fremont District 79	79.3	81.9	82.1
Robertson	Not applicable	Not applicable	30
Decatur District 61	53	52.9	50.7
Springfield Ball	75	64.4	67
Springfield District 186	51.8	51.8	53.2
Thomas Jefferson	*	64.6	63
Community Consolidated District 59	78.3	79.9	77.5
State	62.7	63.1	62.7

*Data not available.

Table 4B. Summary of PSAE Meets/Exceeds Percentages 2001-2002

<i>Charter School/District Name</i>	<i>Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2001</i>	<i>Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2002</i>
The Academy	12.0	10.7
Chicago International	18.1	19.6
Noble Street	Not applicable	45.2
North Lawndale	14.8	15.0
Nuestra America	9.8	2.4
Perspectives	17.6	25.5
Youth Connection	11.1	8.9
Chicago District 299	29.3	29.9
SIU-E. St. Louis	3.2	3.1
East St. Louis District 189	13.1	17.7
State	55.7	56.1

ISAT results of charter schools in Chicago are mixed, with seven schools above the Chicago Public Schools district average and three schools at or below the district average. However, this is an improvement over the prior year, when only three schools were above the district average and four schools were below the district average. Of the six Chicago charter schools with ISAT test results spanning three years, five showed performance increases from year one to year three, with one showing stable results. Chicago charter school PSAE results are also mixed, with three schools showing score increases over the prior year and three showing score declines. Only one school, Noble Street Charter High School, scored higher than the district average. All Chicago charter school ISAT and PSAE scores remain below the state average.

Performance in the rest of the state indicates three charter schools posted scores above their sending district's average and four charter schools posted scores below the district average on the ISAT. Three of these schools equaled or outperformed the state average, while four underperformed. The one downstate charter high school (SIU-E. St. Louis) posted PSAE scores in 2002 that were similar to those of 2001.

Four charter schools are on the list of schools in School Improvement status as defined under the No Child Left Behind law. These schools are Chicago International, Triumphant, and Octavio Paz Charter Schools in Chicago as well as Fort Bowman Academy Charter School in Cahokia.

New Schools for 2001-2002

Four new charter schools opened their doors in the fall of 2001. **Global Village** and **Lawndale Educational And Regional Network (LEARN)** Charter Schools opened in Chicago. **Keep Every Youth Successful (KEYS)** Charter School began operation in Edwardsville District 7, and **Robertson** Charter School opened in Decatur District 61.

School Closures at the end of 2001-2002

Nuestra America Charter School – After completing the initial five-year charter term, this school's charter was not renewed, primarily because of concerns regarding student performance.

Governors State University Charter School – At the end of the second year of a five-year charter, the authorizing district (Crete-Monee District 201U) revoked the charter for this school. This revocation was appealed to the State Board of Education where an appeal panel recommended to the State Superintendent's representative that the district's revocation be upheld. The Superintendent's representative so ruled, and the charter school subsequently filed for judicial review as allowed under the Charter Schools Law. At the time of this report, this case remained in litigation.

Denied Proposals

YouthBuild Rockford Charter School – This proposal for a new charter school was denied by Rockford School District 205 and was appealed to the State Board of Education. After hearing oral arguments from the proposal developer and the school district, the appeal panel recommended to the State Superintendent that this charter be granted directly by the State Board. The Superintendent agreed and recommended to the full State Board that the charter be granted. On a vote of four-four, however, the Board did not approve the charter. The developer filed for judicial review as allowed under the Charter Schools Law. At the time of this report, this case remained in litigation.

Champaign-Urbana Charter School Initiative – This school was proposed to serve students from the neighboring cities of Champaign and Urbana in central Illinois. Although approved by the Urbana school district, it was denied by the Champaign school district and an appeal was filed with the State Board of Education. After reviewing the proposal and hearing testimony at an oral presentation, a three-member appeal panel recommended to the state superintendent that the appeal be denied on the basis of noncompliance with the Charter Schools Law. The superintendent reviewed the panel's report and signed the administrative order adopting the panel's findings and recommendation.

Charter Renewals

Charter agreements may be renewed by the authorizer at the end of the charter term unless the school meets one or more of the following criteria for non-renewal or revocation of a charter:

- Commission of a material violation of the charter agreement
- Failure to meet or make reasonable progress toward agreed-upon pupil performance standards

- Failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management
- Violation of any provision of law from which the school was not exempted

Several charter schools in Chicago participated in the charter renewal process over the spring and summer of 2002 and Chicago Public Schools authorized charter renewals for five schools. These included ***Academy of Communication and Technology, Chicago International, Perspectives, Triumphant, and Youth Connection*** Charter Schools. As noted previously, the authorizing district did not renew the charter for ***Nuestra America*** Charter School.

Charter School Use of Flexibility

The Charter Schools Law exempts charter schools from most Illinois School Code requirements except those deemed essential. The rationale for this exemption is consistent with the purpose of the law, which is to ensure that charter schools have maximum flexibility for serving students while being held accountable for results. Major decisions such as curriculum, service delivery, and program options are left to the discretion of the charter school governing board rather than being subject to state school mandates.

As in 2000-2001, the responses from charter schools operating throughout 2001-2002 specified that having personnel flexibility served their schools and students well. Nearly every response noted that the current law allows schools to hire teachers regardless of certification status (although they must meet qualification requirements as outlined in the Charter Schools Law) which, in turn, allows schools to hire teachers in areas of high need or specialty areas such as math, science, and fine arts.

Other areas of flexibility reported were:

- Autonomy to set educational priorities.
- Autonomy to design curriculum independent from the authorizing district.
- Autonomy to design different, additional performance standards.
- Autonomy to set unique school day and school year schedules, thus allowing for expanded instruction time and opportunities and a family-friendly calendar.
- Autonomy to manage fiscal affairs independent of the authorizing district.
- Autonomy to set employee compensation rates and provide bonuses.

Statutory Changes Suggested by Charter Schools

A specific requirement of the annual report is that it “...*shall include suggested changes in State law necessary to strengthen or change charter schools.*” Charter school administrators were asked what changes in state law would be useful to them in the future. While the State Board of Education is not necessarily recommending that these changes occur, the report reflects recommendations from charter school operators in several areas. Facilities and finance issues figured prominently in the responses and were usually mentioned together. They also reported some administrative needs.

Facility and Finance Needs

- Allocate additional funds to charter schools.
- Provide facilities financing.
- Provide transportation funding.
- Mandate 100% per capita funding.
- Prohibit charter schools from paying rent for district buildings.

Administrative Needs

- Expand teacher certification reciprocity between states.
- Limit the bureaucracy to less paperwork than for regular public schools.
- Allow enrollment preference for employee's children.
- Allow employee's children to attend regardless of their home district.
- Don't allow amendments to the law and rules to take away innovation and autonomy.
- Allow ISBE to authorize charter schools without them having to first go before the local school board.
- Authorize Regional Offices of Education to work with parents to provide the educational choices they desire.
- Remove the cap in order to allow more charter schools to open in Chicago.
- Allow charter schools to hire retired teachers in Chicago.

Statutory Changes for Future Consideration by the State Board of Education

With the closing of Nuestra America at the end of the 2001-2002 school year, Chicago has granted 14 of the 15 charters allowed in the district by law and has accepted additional proposals for the remaining charter. Chicago has expressed a desire for increasing the number of charter schools through support of several legislative attempts in the past two years to raise the cap. Unless the statutory cap on Chicago charters is raised, the district will be unable to open more than one new school in the fall of 2003. The State Board of Education should consider supporting raising the cap on charter schools in Chicago.

In summary, charter schools have fulfilled the intention of the General Assembly to create an avenue for parents, teachers, and community members to create new and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system.



2001-2002 Charter School Locations



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



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